12

Claims

1.   A method for obtaining geographical zone data for a mobile subscriber unit, the method comprising the steps of:

A)   receiving a request from an application for geographical zone data for the mobile subscriber unit, wherein the request includes:

5   a mobile subscriber identifier that is associated with the mobile subscriber unit; and

a zone type that identifies a type of predetermined geographical area; and

B)   returning a reply to the request, wherein the reply includes: a zone
10   identifier that identifies a current geographical area where the mobile subscriber unit is located and the current geographical area has the zone type included in the request.

2.   The method of claim 1 wherein the request further includes:

a switching center identifier that identifies the mobile switching center serving the mobile subscriber unit.

3.   The method of claim 1 wherein the request is a transaction control application protocol message and the reply is a transaction control application protocol message.

4.   The method of claim 3 wherein the request is received over one of a Internet protocol network and a signaling system seven network and the reply is returned over one of a Internet protocol network and a signaling system seven network.

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5.   The method of claim 4 wherein the request is received via a message defined by one of an ANSI41 and a GSM standard.

6.   The method of claim 1 wherein the mobile subscriber unit comprises one of a wireless telephone, personal digital assistant, and computer.

7. The method of claim 1 wherein the mobile subscriber unit is at least one of a voice communications device and a data communications device.

8. The method of claim 1 wherein the zone type identifies one of a personal zone and a shared zone.

9. The method of claim 1 wherein the zone type comprises a request to create a zone.

10. The method of claim 1 wherein the reply includes a text string associated with the zone identifier.

11. A telecommunications network apparatus comprising:

means for receiving a request for geographical zone data for a mobile subscriber unit, wherein the request includes:

a mobile subscriber identifier that is associated with the mobile

5 subscriber unit; and

a zone type that identifies a type of predetermined geographical area;

means for returning a reply to the request, wherein the reply includes: a zone identifier that identifies a current geographical area where the mobile

10 subscriber unit is located and the current geographical area has the zone type included in the request.

12. The apparatus of claim 11 wherein the request further includes:

a switching center identifier that identifies the mobile switching center serving the mobile subscriber unit.

13. The apparatus of claim 12 wherein the request is a transaction control application protocol message and the reply is a transaction control application protocol message.

14.   The apparatus of claim 13 wherein the request is received over one of a Internet protocol network and a signaling system seven network and the reply is returned over one of a Internet protocol network and a signaling system seven network.

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15.   The apparatus of claim 14 wherein the request is received via a message defined by one of an ANSI41 and a GSM standard.

16.   The apparatus of claim 11 wherein the zone type identifies one of a personal zone and a shared zone.

17.   The apparatus of claim 11 wherein the zone type comprises a request to create a zone.

18.   The apparatus of claim 11 wherein the reply includes a text string associated with the zone identifier.

19.   A telecommunications network apparatus comprising:
        a geographical layer interface that receives a request for geographical zone data for a mobile subscriber unit, wherein the request includes:
            a mobile subscriber identifier that is associated with the mobile
5   subscriber unit; and
            a zone type that identifies a type of predetermined geographical area; and
        wherein the geographical layer interface returns a reply to the request, wherein the reply includes: a zone identifier that identifies a current
10   geographical area where the mobile subscriber unit is located and the current geographical area has the zone type included in the request.

20.   The apparatus of claim 19 further comprising:

a zone manager coupled to the geographical layer interface to receive the request;

a location manager coupled to the zone manager to deliver a location

5   of the mobile subscriber unit as determined by a position determination equipment; and

wherein the zone manager uses the location of the mobile subscriber unit and a database of zone data to determine the zone identifier.